2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

In most instances, the unit of extension is the clan, but these relationships are based on individual relations and groups. This point will be further developed in the analysis of the ceremonial structure.

The following behavioristic pattern prevailing between relatives will illustrate this point. For any individual the total number of relationships into which he entered largely determines his "social personality." The most basic of these are between the members of the elementary family, the parents and the children, but in Mandan society this is frequently modified by the presence of old women of the lodge who occupy a virtual second-mother position. An elementary family consisting of parents and children rarely occupied a lodge to the exclusion of all other relatives. There are eight possible combinations of relatives within an elementary family with a general pattern of behavior existing between each pair. They are:

Mother–daughter (*na'E'–mi'nuhą'kE*).—An intimate bond of love and affection existed between a mother and her daughter. Not a single instance of quarreling or serious difference was remembered by the Mandan informants, nor were there disputes over property held in common. They worked together in the gardens or performed domestic tasks in the lodge and were very intimate in their daily relations. She taught the child to grind corn and cure meat, to make baskets and clay pots, to dress hides, to color porcupine quills for decorating clothing, and to care for her own personal effects. She taught her daughter to make a small payment, a small colored bead or a few kernels of corn, for each little skill taught her, thus establishing at an early age a significant behavioristic pattern of paying those who taught her a new skill, a myth or song, or who received her into a rite or dance. Usually there were other women in the lodge whom she addressed as "Mother," and, if one of these had no daughter of her own, she would take over or adopt a daughter from the lodge unit for especial affection and care. Frequently the father's older sister, if she had no one to care for her, would come to the lodge to live when the lodge was one that had been erected or owned in the father's line and the mother had come here to live when marrying because the father was needed to care for his relatives who were old. She was called "daughter"

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592 593 [604] by the father's sister and treated as a daughter. She, on the other hand, thought of the father's sister as a special relative, one who was between the mother and the grandmother and was taught to speak of her as "my little grandmother." She was considered a special "holy woman" who on certain occasions, particularly when a brother or sister died, performed the rites of sending the spirit away.

All the women of the lodge addressed as "mothers" were treated with respect, and all contributed to the daughters' training.

Mother–son (*na'E'–miniks'*).—The same bonds of love and affection existed between the mother and son as was shared between the mother and daughter. It was based on a close kinship bond, though partially modified by sex dichotomy. As a small child he received the same affection as his sisters. The mother would make toys for his amusement, and, when he was three or four years old, she taught him to give her small items such as a few beads or other trinkets in payment for an especially well-decorated robe, moccasins, or leggings. His mother's brother or an older sibling would assist him in securing presents for the mother. [867] His first knowledge about the clan would come from the mother; she would tell him of men of the clan who had been brave in battle, had brought rain for the crops, had been especially kind to the old people of the clan, or had distinguished themselves in other ways. She taught him not to play in front of the platform at the head of the lodge where the ceremonial paraphernalia was kept and explained that, if he obeyed the older men and was industrious and brave, he would some day be custodian of the bundle. His mother encouraged him to join a Boys Society. The son, as a young single man, assisted in the buffalo hunt and helped his parents with the butchering. If the sister married, she was expected to bring her husband to the lodge. Then, when he married, he would live with his wife in another lodge. As a married man this deep affection for his mother and her sisters continued. When returning with meat, knowing she was without fresh meat, he would go to her lodge first and give her the choicest portions before returning to his wife's family. She received the most valuable mare taken on his first horse-stealing raid if his sisters were small. This bond of

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affection continued while his mother lived. Although it was considered improper for a man to be alone in the lodge with his daughter, nothing was thought of a son being alone with his mother.

Father–daughter (*tatE'–mi'nuhą'kE*).—The father was a respect relative providing he remained married to the daughter's mother, otherwise he was generally disregarded, since children of divorced mates were reared by the mother. He was expected to provide for the daughter and, in those families where the father and mother were successfully mated, co-operated with his wife in the training of the children. He avoided being alone with his daughter in the lodge.

Father–son (*tatE'–miniks'*).—A son treated his father with a respect which was sacred in character as he was informed at an early age of his father's fasting and war record and was taught to believe that the family's possession of property and good health was attributable to the father's fasting, respect for sacred objects, and kindness to the old people. The father was expected to provide meat for the family, but he took little part in the care of the son until he was old enough to understand the sacred character of certain objects in the lodge. When the son was old enough to play in the group games, he was encouraged to participate and was given game objects. He was encouraged to fast during the Okipa, if for only a day, and his father would loan him a small item from his personal bundle to wear while fasting. The father was an adviser but not a punishing member of the family. The mother or her brother would teach him to seek advice regularly of the father and present him with a small article of value each time the father offered him significant information. The father would explain that the members of his own clan were the son's "fathers" and that he should seek their advice also. By the time a young man was sixteen or seventeen years of age, the advice of distinguished males of the father's clan was frequently sought, and it was their duty, in the event that the son was killed while away from the village, to see that his skull was returned to the village and placed at one of the shrines.

Husband–wife (*mi'woro–mų'hE*).—The Mandan have several terms for a husband and wife. A man addresses his wife as

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mų'he and others speak of her as *kų̊'hE*. An old man addresses an old wife as *mo'kaka*, meaning "old woman," and she addresses him as "old man." The husband usually lived with his wife's people, and the strength of bond between husband and wife was in a large measure determined by the circumstances of marriage. If parents of a lineage possessing an important tribal bundle secured a white buffalo robe and had a daughter or daughters of marriageable age, they would invite in a young man of another family distinguished for its important tribal bundle and complete a marriage. Such marriages were likely to be permanent, since both the husband and the wife were partners in an important ceremony. When children were born, the bond between husband and wife was further strengthened.

There was a marked sex dichotomy between husband and wife. The woman did the housework, cared for the gardens, repaired the lodge, and, when on tribal hunts, did much of the butchering, while the man did the hunting, cared for the horses, and protected the village in case of attack. The woman was expected to prepare food for ceremonies in which the husband was participating, and, in the buffalo-calling ceremonies, she was expected to "walk with the buffaloes." She was also expected to "walk" with her husband's "fathers" in ceremonial transfers of age-grade societies.

A woman could divorce her husband by the simple expediency of telling him to leave if they were living in the wife's parents' lodge; if living in her husband's parents' lodge, she collected her personal belongings and the children and returned to her parents' lodge. A woman divorced because of cruelty or adultery on the part of her husband, while a man would leave his wife because of trouble with her family or infatuation for another woman.

Few marriages were consummated by mutual selection of the prospective mates; rather the two households made the selection, and children were expected to obey their parents even to the extent of approving mates selected for them. The ties which held husband and wife together were first the respect for their parents, but, when children were born, this parental respect was replaced by mutual affection for the children. Since divorce was easy and common, the household organization was strong,

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

and the extended household preserved the structure in spite of numerous separations of individual families.

When marriage was by exchange of gifts and a feast, and the husband lived with his wife's people, he held prior claim to the wife's sisters as they became of marriageable age, and such marriages were encouraged.

Older brother–younger brother (*mų'kas–mi'cų'ka*).—The bond between brothers was very strong. It was based on common blood and residence and included all in the household who stood in an older brother–younger brother relationship. There was no distinction between siblings and children of the mother's sister if all had a common residence. Older brothers cared for their younger brothers, taught them games and the care of the horses, and teased each other mildly. Quarrels were rare and soon forgotten. The older brother who had participated in the ceremonies would urge the younger brother to follow his example and would assist his younger brother in collecting materials to be presented to the father's clan. If the younger brother showed little interest in fasting or ceremonial participation, the older brother could and frequently did severely criticize him. If a brother were killed in battle, his brother was expected to inflict self-torture and to revenge his death. He also had first claim to his brother's widow, and she could not marry until he made known his intentions.

When grown up and married, brothers co-operated in providing for their mother's household. Brothers co-operated in the purchase of ceremonial bundles and rites. This intimate bond continued for life and was extended to include mother's sister's son's and father's brother's sons, the feeling of nearness being determined by residence and participation in joint activities.

Older sister–younger sister (*mirukE'–ptą'ka*).—The bond between sisters was very strong and was based largely on common blood, mutual activities, and lifelong residence together. No distinction was made between sisters with different fathers, even when the fathers were of different clans. Neither was distinction made between one's own sisters and daughters of the mother's sister if all grew up together in the same household. There was not, however, the same close bond of affection with "sisters" of the father's second wife when his second wife occu-

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

pied a separate lodge. In fact, there was likely to be mild resistance when the girl's own household disapproved of the other marriage which they were obliged to tolerate because of the absence of mature males in their own household. The older sister acted as a "little mother" to her younger sisters, looking out for them while the mother was in the garden or at work tanning hides. When the older sister married, each of the younger sisters became an eligible mate, and frequently sisters remained together through life, possessing a common husband. They inherited the mother's household and gardens, and the oldest sister became the head of the household. When there were several sisters, the younger ones who did not wish to marry the older sister's husband would move into a lodge where the females were of their clan and closely related, helping the household with their work in the gardens. Her brother would select a husband for her and provide for the exchange of goods so that, when the older women died, she would have exclusive possession of a lodge of her own. In the late historic villages, it was often impossible to find space for additional lodges, since all were closely grouped within a fortification.

Quarrels between sisters were generally unknown, and younger sisters who moved to another lodge did so out of respect to the married sisters, believing that a man having too many wives would not be able to provide for all of them. A sister would raise children of a deceased sister, and, the tribe being matrilinear, there was no change of clans. The relations of sisters to each other and to the mother was the foundation of the Mandan household and was based on the inheritance of the lodge, lodge property, and the gardens. A daughter was expected to help the mother and to take over her mother's property when she died.

Brother–sister (*mi'cų'ka–ptami'hE*).—Brothers and sisters played together when young, and there was a close bond of affection between them. As they grew older, they avoided being alone together, and the prevailing games and economic activities separated them. Even after marriage, a man considered his mother's household his own. After his mother's death, his interest in his sister and her household continued. He would bring her portions of fresh meat from animals he had killed. If she had no horses, when returning from a raiding expedition, he would

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

give her the best mare taken. She would not refuse him anything he asked of her, and, if he were killed while fighting with the enemy, she was expected to inflict self-torture and dress in mourning. She would assist her brothers in acquiring property needed for the ceremonies. This bond of mutual assistance was not affected by his subsequent marriage. Brothers and sisters were supposed to share in the perpetuation of their parents' ceremonial bundles. In old age, when their respective families were broken up by deaths, brothers would frequently return to the parental lodge. The smallpox epidemic of 1837 left many orphans, and these were taken into households where the females were of the same clan.

Grandfather–grandchild (*tata'xis–ptawi'hąkE*).—The grandfather–grandchild relation was, in general, one of affection. The grandfather would make toys for his grandsons, teach them stories, and watch after them when on summer buffalo hunts, especially when moving camp or while the men and women of middle age were busy butchering and drying meat. Of the large number of persons addressed as "grandfather," the closest relations were those associated with him in the daily life of the household. The lodge grandfather was usually the one to take a grandson to the river early each morning to bathe. He teased his grandson mildly for falling off a horse or for small infractions of tribal custom, but the grandson would not reciprocate, since the grandfather was respected for his knowledge of tribal lore, the enemies he had struck, or the horses he had captured. A young man was expected to respect older people as holy, since in their lifetime they had had experiences with sacred things in the ceremonies.

The grandfather would play with a granddaughter when she was young and teach her stories. When she attained the age of ten years, he would avoid her lest people gossip. Should he come into the lodge and find a granddaughter alone, he would leave immediately.

A grandfather never punished grandchildren, but he would scold them. A grandfather living in the lodge was highly respected and was very helpful in preparing a grandson for ceremonies and war expeditions. If he became cross as he grew old, the grandson generally avoided him. If the grandfather was of

2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

his fundamental training in warfare. In company with other young men, and frequently afoot, whereas the main party was on horseback, they were required to travel ahead, watching from high buttes, and by means of signals to report the presence of an enemy or horses. It was necessary for the scouts to keep in touch with their leader, who, in turn, was intrusted with the duty of relaying information to the main body. New scouts were taught the proper posture when running to prevent premature exhaustion, and there were contests between scouts to determine their relative durability in reaching distant lookout points. The leader of the scouts reported the winners to the leader, who praised them publicly when the party returned to the village. The old women then sang their victory songs while the old men encouraged more fasting.

A sister was taught that fasting while her brother was away on war expeditions would bring him success in "striking the enemy" or capturing horses. She would take quill work with her at daybreak and leave the village for a low hill or mound or recline on a platform in the garden where she would cry for his success, addressing her prayers to all the holy things. If the expedition was long overdue, she would go to the scaffolds of deceased relatives or skull circles to weep, returning to her lodge each evening. Successful war parties returned to the village at daybreak, and she would leave her lodge immediately to meet her brother. If he had captured horses, the best animal was presented to her. This was equivalent to presenting the horse to all the females of his mother's lodge. These females, on the other hand, were the principal mourners if he were killed, and the married sisters were expected to undergo extreme self-inflicted torture by gashing their bodies, cutting off the ends of fingers, cutting their hair, and shortening their dresses.

Their brothers fasted four, seven, or nine days without food or water, remaining outside the village in some secluded spot for the full period of the fast. From time to time, the father would send a clan brother to observe whether his son was endangering his life, and he could stop the fast if in his opinion the young man's self-torture was excessive. A young man returning from fasting which had not induced a vision was given an object from his father's bundle to carry on war expeditions and

6: Wied-Neuwied T-5 (1832-1834) 1843 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

593 Sisters have great privileges among these Indians. All the horses which a young man steals, or captures in war, belong to them. If an Indian returns from an expedition on horseback, and meets his sister, he will immediately alight, and give her the horse; on the other hand, if he wishes to possess some object of value belonging to his sister, for instance, a dress, he goes and abruptly demands it, and immediately receives it; even should it be the very dress she is wearing, she will take it off at once, and give it to her brother.

837 Prudery is not a virtue of the Indian women; they have often two, three, or more lovers: infidelity is not often punished. There was only one woman among the Mandans, a piece of whose nose was cut off, a circumstance which is very common among the Blackfeet. If an Indian elopes with a married woman, the husband whom she has abandoned avenges himself by seizing the seducer's property, his horses and other things of value, to which the latter must quietly submit. Such a woman is never taken back. If a man has the eldest daughter of a family for his wife, he has a right to all her sisters. A chief business of the young men among these Indian tribes is to try their fortune with the young maidens and the women, and this, together with their toilet, fills up the greater part of their time. They do not meet with many coy beauties. In the evening, and generally till late at night, they roam about the villages, or in the vicinity, or from one village to the other. They have a singular mode of displaying their achievements in this field, especially when they visit the women in their best dresses. On these occasions they endeavour to gain credit by the variety of their triumphs, and mark the number of conquered beauties by bundles of peeled osier twigs, painted red at the tips. These sticks are of two kinds. Most of them are from two to three feet in length, others five or six feet. The latter, being carried singly, are painted with white and red rings alternately, which indicates the number of conquests. The shorter sticks are only painted red at the tips, and every stick indicates an exploit, the number of which is often bound up into a pretty large bundle. Thick fasces of this kind are carried about by the dandies in their gallant excursions. Among the Mandans these sticks are generally quite plain; among the Manitaries, on the contrary, there is, usually, in the middle of the bundle, one larger stick, at the end of which there is a tuft of black feathers. These feathers indicate the favourite, and the dandies tell everybody that she is the person for whom this honour is intended. (See Plate XXI. Fig. 6.)

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If these people have had familiar intercourse with a person who wore the white buffalo robe, a piece of skin of that colour is fastened to the stick; if she wore a red blanket, or buffalo robe, a piece of red cloth is fastened to the stick. This custom, which is well known among the Mandans and Manitaries, has not, to my knowledge, been mentioned by any traveller.

601 000 They have distinct names for the several degrees of relationship. The father's brother is called father, and the mother's sister, mother; cousins are called brothers and sisters. The

7: Catlin R, E-5 (1832-1840) 1857
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

From the enslaved and degraded condition in which the women are held in the Indian country, the world would naturally think that theirs must be a community formed of incongruous and unharmonizing materials; and consequently destitute of the fine, reciprocal feelings and attachments which flow from the domestic relations in the civilized world; yet it would be untrue, and doing injustice to the Indians, to say that they were in the least behind us in conjugal, in filial, and in paternal affection. There is no trait in the human character which is more universal than the attachments which flow from these relations, and there is no part of the human species who have a stronger affection and a higher regard for them than the North American Indians.

There is no subject in the Indian character of more importance to be rightly understood than this, and none either that has furnished me more numerous instances and more striking proofs, of which I shall make use on a future occasion, when I shall say a vast deal more of marriage—of divorce—of polygamy—and of Indian domestic relations. For the present I am scribbling about the looks and usages of the Indians who are about me and under my eye; and I must not digress too much into general remarks, lest I lose sight of those who are near me, and the first to be heralded.

Such, then, are the Mandans—their women are beautiful and modest,—and amongst the respectable families, virtue is as highly cherished and as inapproachable, as in any society whatever; yet at the same time a chief may marry a dozen wives if he pleases, and so may a white man; and if either wishes to marry the most beautiful and modest girl in the tribe, she is valued only equal, perhaps, to two horses, a gun with powder and ball for a year, five or six pounds of beads, a couple of gallons of whiskey, and a handful of awls.

The girls of this tribe, like those of most of these north-western tribes, marry at the age of twelve or fourteen, and some at the age of eleven years; and their beauty, from this fact, as well as from the slavish life they lead, soon after marriage vanishes. Their occupations are almost continual, and they seem to go industriously at them, as if from choice or inclination, without a murmur.

The principal occupations of the women in this village, consist in procuring wood and water, in cooking, dressing robes and other skins, in drying meat and wild fruit, and raising corn (maize). The Mandans are somewhat of agriculturists, as they raise a great deal of corn and some pumpkins and squashes. This is all done by the women, who make their hoes of the shoulder-blade of the buffalo or the elk, and dig the ground over instead of ploughing it, which is consequently done with a vast deal of labour. They raise a very small sort of corn, the ears of which are not longer than a man's thumb. This variety is well adapted to their climate, as it ripens sooner than other varieties, which would not mature in so cold a latitude. The green corn season is one of great festivity with them, and one of much importance. The greater part of their crop is eaten during these festivals,